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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Consideration of reports by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Fifth and sixth periodic reports of States parties due in 2013

Burundi*

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ABEJA Burundian Association for the Education of Youth and Adults

ABUBEF Family Welfare Association of Burundi

ACORD Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development

AFAB Business Women's Association of Burundi

CAMEBU Central Essential Medication Purchasing Agency of Burundi

CARE Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere, Inc.

CCDC Communal Community Development Committee

CCEM Caisse coopérative d'épargne et de crédit mutuel (Credit Union)

CDC Hillside [Community] Development Centre

CDFC Family and Community Development Centre

CFPJ Professional Training Centre for the Justice Sector

CNIDH Independent National Commission on Human Rights

ICGLR International Conference on the Great Lakes Region

CNLS National Anti-AIDS Council

CNTS National Blood Transfusion Centre

CORDAID Catholic Organisation for Relief and Development Aid

SFPR Strategic Framework for Poverty Reduction

CVR Truth and Reconciliation Commission

EDSB2010 Burundi's 2010 Demographic and Health Survey

ENA National School of Administration

IFAD International Fund for Agricultural Development

FMCR Rural Microcredit Fund

UNFPA United Nations Population Fund

GBVIMS Gender-Based Violence Information Management System

GIG Guide to Gender Mainstreaming in Implementation of the PNRA

GNWP Global Network of Women Peacebuilders

IEC Information, Education, Communication

INSP National Institute of Public Health

IRC International Rescue Committee

OAG Government Action Observatory

ILO International Labour Organization

MDGs Millennium Development Goals

ONPR	National Pensions and Occupational Risks Office for civil servants, magistrates and judicial personnel
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OPEC	Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
PAIVA	Agricultural Intensification and Value-enhancing Support Project
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
PNE	National Water Policy
PNG	National Gender Policy
PNRA	National Programme for Public Administration Reform
PNSR	National Reproductive Health Programme
PRDMR	Rural Recovery and Development Programme
PSDEF	Education and Training Sector Development Plan 2009- 2016
PMTCT	Prevention of mother-to-child transmission
PTRPC	Transitional Programme of Post-Conflict Reconstruction
RGPH	General Population and Housing Census
SRML	Inheritance, marital property and gifts
SWAA	Society for Women against AIDS in Africa
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
GBV	Gender-based violence
HIV/AIDS	Human immunodeficiency virus / acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
WAP	Women and Allies Peacebuilders
WISE	Women's Initiative for Self-Empowerment

Executive Summary

1. This periodic report of Burundi on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is a combination of the fifth and sixth reports, which it replaces. It comes at a time when the country is achieving political stability after more than a decade of armed conflict. Burundian women, who had been the principal victims, are reaping the benefits of stability recovered thanks to the political, legislative and socio-economic measures adopted. Efforts are being made to implement the Convention despite the constraints in the State of Burundi stemming from the social and economic difficulties it faces.

2. The Burundian Government has paid particular attention to the Committee's recommendations following presentation of the second report (combining the second, third and fourth reports) in January 2008. The present report covers implementation of the CEDAW between then and now.

3. Implementation of the Convention is hampered mainly by the country's social and economic insecurity, exacerbated by currently unfavourable international economic and financial trends. Burundian women are those hardest hit by these circumstances. Despite significant progress with the promotion of women's rights since 2008, Burundi's efforts are thwarted by the many obstacles most developing countries face.

4. The Government is attempting to overcome these hurdles with the support of the international community by adopting strategies designed to enhance national development, consolidate peace and thereby improve living conditions for women. In particular, it is pursuing the new strategic framework for growth and poverty reduction (SFPR II).

5. Actions to implement the Convention have been undertaken in numerous spheres, most notably in connection with political and special measures, human rights and fundamental freedom, stereotypes and prejudices regarding men's and women's roles, and efforts to combat prostitution (Articles 2 to 6). In particular, these actions have sought to bring legislation into line with the CEDAW and to safeguard women's freedoms and dignity through equality with men by working on the cultural factors that perpetuate prejudices and stereotypes.

6. The Burundian State has also implemented the CEDAW through measures affecting political and public life, women's representation [in government offices and international organizations] abroad, and nationality rights (Article 7 to 9). Since 2008, notable progress has been made with women's participation in institutions, including government, parliament, elective local authority positions (the Constitution requires at least 30% female representation, and the installation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. There are still social and cultural barriers which the Government is addressing with a view to bringing about far-reaching reforms to long-standing customs, with respect to nationality rights, inheritance, marital property, and gifts.

7. In implementing the Convention, the Government has endorsed (as best it can given Burundi's limited resources) the Committee's concerns regarding the social and economic spheres and rural women (Article 10 to 14). The Burundian State acknowledges the shortfalls in the resources at its disposal in these areas. It has, nevertheless, striven to adopt measures to overcome traditional attitudes that perpetuate discrimination and run counter to the provisions of the Convention, by encouraging girls' access to education on an equal footing with boys, and so on. The results are promising and in the 2011-2012 school year, for the first time Burundi achieved fully equal access to primary school for girls and boys.

8. Steps have been taken to guarantee conformity with the ILO Convention No. 100 on Equal Remuneration, with the aim of guaranteeing women equal conditions with respect to men. A series of in-depth reforms is under way to achieve implementation of the CEDAW in conformity with the ILO Conventions. The same can be said of the mechanisms initiated to oversee compliance with existing legislation which calls for a gender-sensitive employment policy in the informal sector.

9. The Burundian State is committed to providing health care for the entire population. To that end, the Government has continued its efforts to improve the country's health care infrastructure, to mainstream gender equality across all health sector reforms, to adopt whatever measures are needed to improve women's access to health care and health-related services, and so on.

10. As for social benefits, some changes have been made to family welfare benefits. Nevertheless, the social benefits system is still incipient in Burundi. The right to access bank loans is still in force and Burundian women always have access to credit on an equal footing with men. Women's participation in recreational activities, sport and all other aspects of cultural life is continuing to expand, above all in urban settings.

11. Burundi noted the particular emphasis on rural women in the Committee's recommendations and consequently adopted several measures in that regard.

12. Concerning equality, marriage and family relations (Articles 15 and 16), measures have been implement and actions are under way to remove the impediments that women may face in gaining access to justice and the Government is receiving support from the international community for its efforts to bring about such equality. With respect to marriage and, in particular, the matter of having the family code ensure the de jure and de facto equality of women with regard to inheritance, marital property, and gifts, the Code has not yet been amended, but actions are under way. The Government is bent on refining its strategy for moving methodically in that direction in such a way as to diminish the still numerous social obstacles. As part of that methodological approach, a study is being conducted to assess the impact of the law that will serve as an important tool for raising awareness among the population.

13. This report devotes special attention to the measures adopted to eradicate gender-based violence (GBV). Comprehensive strategies to combat all forms of violence against women have been established and firm law enforcement measures taken, and more of them are being prepared, in synergy between the Government, civil society organizations, and communities.

14. In short, these advances have been achieved in a difficult social and economic context that required considerable effort on the country's part, which will not cease until the inequalities and other discriminations against women that still exist in society are finally eliminated.

Introduction

15. The Government of Burundi has paid special attention to the observations and recommendations made by the Committee following presentation of the last report. It would like to thank the Committee above all for its advice, which has enabled the country to make progress with regard to women's rights, particularly with respect to implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Burundi is a State party to the Convention, which it ratified without reservations on 4 April 1991 through Decree-Law No. 1/006. It presented its initial report, which was reviewed by the Committee on 17 and 23 January 2001, during its 488th, 489th and 496th sessions. The single

report replacing the second, third and fourth periodic reports was presented in February 2008. In the improved political environment since the end of the last conflict, which may be said to have lasted from 21 October 1993 to 7 September 2006, the date on which the cease-fire was signed by the Government and the last rebel movement, PALIPEHUTU-FNL, the Burundian State has striven, despite the socio-economic constraints it faces, to implement the Convention.

16. Burundian women, who had been the principal victims of the conflict, are reaping the benefits of stability recovered thanks to the political, legislative and socio-economic measures adopted. Since 2008, the country has made significant progress with promoting women's rights. The second democratic general elections since the end of the conflict were held in 2010 and led to institutions being renewed in accordance with the will of the people who went to the polls (in presidential, parliamentary, communal and hillside community elections). Significantly, progress was reflected in women taking up at least 30% of the positions in all elective bodies, with the exception of the hillside communities in which, on average, women hold 20% of the elected positions.

17. Nevertheless, Burundi is experiencing a period of economic difficulties that affect women. They reflect the international context of a global financial crisis that hits weak economies hardest and the post-conflict setting where the emphasis is on reconstruction. Despite the difficulties, the country has tried to do all it can to handle the situation in such a way as avoid discrimination against women. In particular, with international community support, the Government has embarked on a new strategic framework to promote growth and combat poverty (SFPR II), which is the product of long and laborious consensus-building with all the country's social, economic and political partners, in which women's representation amounted to 27.4% (cf. SFRP II), The SFRP II accords pride of place to women's priorities, as described by women themselves during the consensus-building process.

18. It was in this context of political stability (despite scars left at the end of the conflict), accompanied by difficult economic circumstances at home and abroad, that this periodic report on implementation of the Convention was prepared. Actions to implement the Convention have been undertaken in numerous spheres, but they are at risk of being undermined by the current economic situation, which negatively affects the external aid flows that contributed to the socio-economic advancement of women and, above all, their empowerment. While a step in the right direction has been taken, that progress needs to be maintained and reinforced.

19. This report is divided into two parts: I. General information. II. Implementation of the Convention

I. General Information

20. Burundi, a landlocked Central African country, has an area of 27,834 km2. Burundi, a landlocked Central and East African country, has an area of 27,834 km2, including 2,000 km2 of lakes and 23,500 km2 of land that can be used for agriculture. It is bordered by Rwanda to the north, the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the west and the United Republic of Tanzania to the south and east.

21. According to the General Population and Housing Census (RGPH) of 2008, the population of Burundi numbers 8,053,574, 51% of whom are women and 49% men. The male-female ratio is 97 boys to 100 girls. The (annual) population growth rate was 2.37% in 2011 and the density 310 inhabitants per km2. That makes Burundi one of the most densely populated

countries in Africa. The average household comprises 4.7 people. The population under 15 years of age accounts for 44% of the total population. The urbanization rate is 10%. The entire population speaks the same language: Kirundi.

A. Economic and Social Context

22. Burundi depends heavily on agriculture, which accounts for 43% of gross domestic product (GDP) and is mainly in the hands of women, who are still using archaic methods. The secondary sector accounts for 16% of GDP and the tertiary sector 35%. Taxes and other levies amount to 6% of GDP (Burundi. Demographic and Health Survey 2010). Burundi is ranked among the least developed countries with a GDP per capita of US$215 and with 67.6% of the population living below the income poverty level (54.5% in dire straits), according to the RGPH, 2008. Poverty is more pronounced in rural areas than in the cities. Based on income, there are 1.7 times more poor people in rural areas (1.2 times more, if other indicators are used).

23. To reduce poverty by aiming to increase incomes, the cost associated with income poverty redressal would be 531.57 billion Burundian francs (approximately US$354.38 million), of which 472.89 billion Burundian francs (approximately US$315.26 million), or 88.96%, would be for rural areas (RGPH 2010).

24. Coffee exports are the main source of foreign exchange. However, coffee is subject to both weather conditions and volatile international prices. Other primary products are tea and cotton. Secondary and tertiary sector development is important for the overall socio-economic development of the country, but is still incipient.

25. Economic growth has picked up since 2001. At that time inflation was 7%. In 2010, it fell to 4%. The country remains heavily dependent on external financing, which was equivalent to 24% of GDP in 2010. (See Table No. 1: Changes in certain macroeconomic indicators, annexed to this report.)

26. While the GDP per capita figures show it doubling between 2005 and 2011, the economic growth rate is still low for a country in a post-conflict scenario facing numerous socio-economic challenges.

B. Political context

27. The political context has changed considerably since the signing of the Arusha Accord for peace and reconciliation in Burundi in 2000. The country went through a transitional period that was originally expected to last 36 months but that in the end was extended by a further 10 months, ending with the 2005 general elections. They were won by the former rebel movement CNDD-FDD, which also won the 2010 general elections.

28. It was during the period of transition that a definitive ceasefire agreement was signed at Dar-es-Salaam on 16 November 2003 with the CNDD-FDD. The movement then joined the Government and all the transitional institutions as well as the new defence and security force. Peace was then restored throughout the country with the exception of a few communes which remained under the influence of the Palipehutu-FNL. It, too, signed the ceasefire agreement on 7 September 2006 and has become a licensed political party under the name FNL.

29. As it emerged from conflict, the country benefited from all kinds of support aimed at consolidating peace and reconstruction, which then diminished when the international

environment deteriorated. Nevertheless, while it was impaired by those economic and financial setbacks, implementation of the CEDAW continued and, in some areas, made considerable progress.

C. Legal context

30. From an advancement of women perspective, Burundi's newly acquired Constitution is revolutionary. It combines element of the 1992 Constitution, which ushered in the multi-party system, and the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Accord for Burundi of 2000. Article 19 incorporates the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and all the other international human rights instruments.

31. However, Burundian legislation still contains some outmoded laws and some matters have not been legislated. Nevertheless, reforms are under way. They have to do, in particular, with:

- Inheritance, matrimonial regimes and gifts, which are still governed by customary law;
- The Personal and Family Code (Article 126 on the obligatory consent of the wife for any act concerning the disposition of a jointly held asset, and Article 88 to establish the same legal age of marriage for girls and boys);
- The Labour Code, where sections on the private sector need to be brought into line with the Convention, particularly with respect to paid maternal leave.

II. Implementation of the Convention

32. As regards implementation of the Convention, this report systematically follows the order of its provisions, taking care to address the various concerns and recommendations of the Committee. It comprises five Parts, the last of which refers to special measures taken against gender-based violence.

Part I: Political and special measures, human rights and fundamental freedoms, stereotypes and prejudices, and prostitution (Articles 2 to 6)

33. The Committee had recalled "the obligation of the State party to systematically and continuously implement all the provisions of the Convention." It had also considered "that the concerns and recommendations identified in the present concluding comments require[ed] the State party's priority attention." Consequently, it had asked Burundi "to focus on those areas in its implementation activities and to report on action taken and results achieved in its next periodic report" (**Paragraph 9**). This is what we have done and the methodology employed in this report follows that recommendation as the following paragraphs illustrate.

34. The Committee had also asked Burundi to "submit the present concluding observations to all relevant ministries, to Parliament and the judiciary in order to ensure their effective implementation (Paragraph 9). That was done as needed whenever an opportunity arose requiring reference to the Convention and this is reflected in the ministries' sectoral policies. The ministries most involved in implementing women's rights, namely those responsible for public health, public safety, justice, public service, and so on have gender focal points whose chief task is to implement national policy on gender, especially through implementation of the provisions of the Convention.

Article 2

35. The Committee had « reiterate[d] its recommendation that the State party take the necessary steps to bring discriminatory laws, inter alia, the Code of the Person and the Family and the Penal Code, into line with the Convention. It strongly recommends amendment of the provisions that stipulate a minimum marriage age for women that is different from that for men (article 88 of the Code of the Person and the Family), indicate that the man is the head of the household (article 122 of the Code of the Person and the Family) and establish discrimination with regard to adultery (article 3 of the Penal Code) (**Paragraph 12**). The Government is bent on amending various laws that have a profound impact on the way Burundian society is structured as well as traditional customs that are deeply rooted in its people's souls and are a core part of their lives. That has involved taking all necessary precautions. That is why steps have taken – studies, in particular – to review all aspects of social life and to fine-tune ways of raising awareness and advocating change without rocking the very foundations of Burundian society. In addition, together with its national and international partners, the Government is working hard to sensitize all segments of the population and encourage them to take a positive view of the reforms under way in connection with the aforementioned laws. Article 3 of the Criminal Code has been revised.

36. A series of reforms are envisaged, to be undertaken through the SFPR I, which includes gender in its first strategic area: "Strengthening of the rule of law, consolidation of good governance and promotion of gender equality." A preliminary draft Code of Persons and the Family is currently being studied, in which the Government intends to heed everybody's proposed amendments, including suggestions by civil society.

37. The Committee "again calls on the Government to ensure the effective implementation of laws and policies that provide for de jure equality and seek to eliminate discrimination against women" (**Paragraph 12**). Since 2008, the Government has continued to take steps designed to implement policies that provide for de jure equality and seek to eliminate discrimination against women. In 2010, it established the Ombudsperson's Office, the Department of Gender Equality in charge of monitoring implementation of gender equality policies and laws, the National Action Plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325, the National Women's Forum (installed in March) 2010 , and the Independent National Commission on Human Rights (CNIDH). The tasks assigned to the CNIDH include "drawing the Government's attention to all cases of human rights violations wherever they occur and proposing any measures likely to enhance protection of said rights" (Article 4 of Law No. 4 of 5 January 2011 on the establishment of the CNIDH) as well as combating gender-based violence and promoting principles of equality. Thus the CNIDH monitors implementation of the laws and policies providing for equality and for the elimination of discrimination, above all by drawing the Government's attention to all instances of human rights violations, wherever they occur, and to the alleged perpetrators or their victims.

38. Steps are taken to ensure that women are not discriminated against despite certain articles of the Code of the Person and the Family (CPF). The same is true with respect to the lack of the law on inheritance, matrimonial regimes and gifts (SRML). In fact, to ensure that women are not discriminated against, administrative (the grass-roots reconciliatory justice system) and judicial (case-law) customs and practices demonstrate that the authorities do everything they can to safeguard equality between men and women and to eliminate discrimination against women.

39. The instruments that Burundi has developed to combat discrimination are to be found above all in the Constitution and in the National Gender Policy. Awareness-raising campaigns are conducted to ensure that this policy is implemented and the Constitution observed with

respect to gender, particularly when it comes to nominating women candidates for decision-making positions. Since 2010, the Government has also had a National Strategy to Combat GBV.

40. Likewise, in December 2011, together with its national partners, the Government initiated the National Action Plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325. A National Women's Forum was established in March 2013.

41. The Committee recommended "that the Government ensure that those responsible for the implementation of these laws and policies are made aware of their discriminatory contents and that information campaigns be put in place to ensure wide knowledge of the reform of these laws and policies" (**Paragraph 12**). "Those responsible" are indeed informed through a number of channels and occasions. Workshops and briefing sessions on gender-sensitive issues are organized for women parliamentarians and senators, as well as for community administrators and local elected representatives.

42. Every year the Ministry for Gender and Human Rights organizes:

- The "16 days of advocacy against gender violence" campaign to provide information In addition, since 2010, it has been running an "open house day on Resolution 1325";
- The celebration of International Women's Day on March 8;
- Publicity and communication via radio and television spots;
- The publication of official circulars; and so on.

43. The Committee had urged Burundi "to provide legal aid services and recommends that awareness-raising and information campaigns be undertaken, targeting women and non-governmental organizations working on women's issues and human rights, to encourage them to make use of the available procedures and remedies for violations of their rights" (Paragraph 16). The Government has already taken several steps to address the Committee's concerns and implement this recommendation, mainly by:

- Identifying victims of GBV and paying their lawyers' fees;
- Keeping track of the cases files and proceedings relating to victims through to the end and to execution of the judgments handed down;
- Listening to and counselling victims (especially in police and prosecutors' offices);
- Transporting victims and victims' witnesses from their homes to the competent courts. Often, the places where the alleged perpetrators are held are far from the victims' homes. The Burundian State and NGOs collaborate in the transportation of witnesses and victims to the court;
- The Government and its partners also provide itinerant court services to bring the justice system closer to victims' homes'
- Family and Community Development Centres (CDFC) assist women victims of injustice on a daily basis; and so on.

44. Through its various agencies, the Government regularly organizes awareness-raising and information campaigns targeting women and NGOs to encourage them to make use of the available procedures and remedies for violations of their rights. For instance, it has already organized:

- Several awareness-raising sessions for women parliamentarians on Resolution 1325;

- Awareness-raising workshops on Resolution 1325 for local elected representatives, members of community and hillside community councils and women representing provinces (17 provinces) and communes (129 communes);
- Meetings organized by the ministry responsible for gender to raise awareness of gender issues among members of women's associations. All these activities are organized by the Government with its partners from civil society, international organizations and international NGOs;
- Several media campaigns; and so on.

Article 3

45. Progress has been made since the last report (CEDAW/C/BDI/4). The Government has taken legislative measures to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men. That is apparent from the National Gender Policy (PNG) in force since 2003. In early 2011, the Government commissioned an evaluation of the status of implementation of the PNG. That evaluation report has served as a guide for implementing Article 3 of the Convention. It helped establish the main areas to be addressed by the 2011-2015 PNG intervention framework aimed at bringing about gender equality in Burundi. To obtain that objective, the PNG pursues the following six strategies:

- Improving the social and cultural standing of women in the family and in society;
- Strengthening equitable access to basic services for women, men, and adolescents;
- Equitably promoting women's and men's potential and position in the economy;
- Promoting the equitable exercise of the rights and responsibilities of women and men;
- Equitably promoting the participation of women and men in decision-making spheres and in peace and security consolidation mechanisms;
- Strengthening the intervention capacities of the institutional mechanisms for implementing the PNG.

46. Mention should also be made of the 2025 Vision and the SFPR II which accord pride of place to gender equality.

Article 4

47. The Committee also recommended "that the State party have local and international recourse to temporary special measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation 25, as part of a strategy to accelerate the achievement of substantive equality between men and women, particularly in education, the judicial system, and decision-making" (**Paragraph 20**). One notable special measure adopted by the Government as part of a strategy to accelerate the achievement of substantive equality between men and women, particularly in education, the judicial system, and decision-making is the Guide to Gender Mainstreaming in the National Programme for Public Administration Reform (PNRA).

48. The other measures in the strategy for accelerating the realization of substantive equality between men and women in education have been adopted (***see paragraph78 regarding Article 10***). Concerning the same measures in the judicial system, ***see paragraph 133***.

Article 5

49. "The Committee urges the State party to take measures to eliminate cultural practices and stereotypes that discriminate against women, in accordance with articles 2 (f) and 5 (a) of the Convention" (**Paragraph 18**). Burundi has taken steps in numerous areas to eliminate such practices and stereotypes.

Legal:

- The 2009 revision of the Criminal Code deleted the discriminatory clauses and increased the penalties for violence against women;
- There is a specific bill exclusively on the prevention and punishment of gender-based violence, which is mostly to the detriment of women;
- Awareness campaigns on the need for a law on succession, matrimonial regimes and gifts;
- Efforts to prepare public opinion to accept the promulgation of the law on succession, matrimonial regimes and gifts; and so on.

Political and institutional:

- Updating of the National Gender Policy and its plan of action in line with the major programmes pursued by the country: the SFPR II, the MDGs and Vision 2025;
- Installation of a Resolution 1325 Steering Committee;
- The representation of women in decision-making for a set by the Constitution at at least 30%, as well as in the peacekeeping missions and other bodies such as the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) and the Independent National Commission on Human Rights (CNIDH), and so on;
- Increasing participation of women in the security and defence sectors;
- Increasing participation of women in peacekeeping missions to countries with conflicts;
- Preparation of national strategies for gender mainstreaming in the police and in the defence and education sectors;
- The obligation for all ministerial institutions to include gender in their sector policy and to establish a separate budget for it in their budgetary projections as of 2012; and so on.

Community and social organization:

- Inclusion of women in the institution known as "Bashingantahe" (for centuries reserved for traditional wise men only);
- Numerous awareness-raising activities at the community level (in all areas of health, education, GBV, security, and so on).

Economic:

- Inroad by women into the business world: there is a very dynamic Association of Businesswomen (AFAB), a woman Chair of the Federal Chamber of Commerce and industry of Burundi, and, in the banking sector, two powerful micro-finance institutions started by women's organizations (CCEM and WISE);
- There are no longer any barriers to granting loans to a married woman; and so on.

Education:

- Nowadays, girl mothers are allowed to continue attending school;
- In 2012, the Ministry Responsible for Primary and Secondary Education adopted a strategy for gender mainstreaming in the education sector;
- There is a textbook aimed at combating stereotypes, etc.

Health:

- There are awareness raising radio spots on health in general, and reproductive health and family planning in particular, targeting women and men together. This has brought results in terms of knowledge about sterility or the transmission of HIV/AIDS which in the popular imagination were traditionally blamed on women.
- Comprehensive care for victims of GBV in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund, which has supported civil society efforts through the Seruka and Nturengaho centres and the SWAA and ABUBEF organizations, by providing medicines and service provider training. There are, on average, 180 victims a month, 78% of whom receive medical care within 72 hours.
- Inclusion of medical, psychological and social care for survivors of gender-based violence in the 2010-2015 Strategic Reproductive Health .Plan

Employment:

- It has become a habit now to end almost all job offers with phrases such as: "Female candidates encouraged," "With equal skills, priority given to female candidates," etc.

50. The Committee "urges the State party to cooperate in this regard with civil society organizations, women's groups and community leaders, as well as teachers and the media" (**Paragraph 18**). Implementation of this commitment to cooperate with these organizations and groups is reflected in Burundi's implementation of the foregoing recommendation (***paragraph 49***). All the above-mentioned activities were carried out together with women's groups and community leaders, teachers and the media, depending on the specific task at hand.

51. The Committee had invited the Burundian State "to increase its efforts to design and implement education and awareness-raising programmes targeting women and men at all levels of society, with a view to creating an enabling environment for the elimination of stereotypes that are discriminatory to women and allowing women to exercise their fundamental rights" (*Paragraph 18*). Efforts were undertaken at the national and local levels through training programmes and training and awareness seminars and workshops for public officials, civil society actors and community leaders. In addition, the CDFC have community awareness-raising and information programmes, which help to change mind-sets and create an egalitarian culture capable of establishing an enabling environment for the elimination of stereotypes that are discriminatory to women and allowing them to exercise their fundamental rights.

52. The Committee called on Burundi "to periodically review the measures taken in order to assess their impact, to take appropriate action and to report thereon to the Committee in its next report" (**Paragraph 18**). This has already been done, especially in the study evaluating implementation of the PNG (***see paragraph 45***, above).

Article 6

53. The Committee had recommended "analys[ing] the causes and extent of trafficking in women and girls, from its perspective as a country of origin, transit and destination"

(**Paragraph 28**). With the help of it international partners, including UNICEF, Burundi had a study conducted to evaluate the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Burundi. The study was conducted in December 2011 in the following towns: Bujumbura, Rumonge, Makamba, Gitega and Muyinga, and published in February 2012. It ascertained the reality of sexual exploitation of girls, including girls of a very young age. It takes several forms, including the prostitution of children, sexual tourism, and early and forced marriages.

54. The Committee had recommended "strengthen[ing] measures to combat and prevent trafficking in women and girls and to improve the economic situation of women so as to eliminate their vulnerability to exploitation and traffickers" (**Paragraph 28**).The Government is conscious of this phenomenon. With the help of civil society partners and international organizations, it has organized training sessions and awareness campaigns on the gravity of the phenomenon, with a view to preventing and fighting it.

55. Furthermore, the Government has inserted into the Criminal Code (Law No.1/05 of 22 April 2009, revising the Criminal Code) clause that severely punish trafficking in women and girls. Involved are above all offences against public morals *(les bonnes mœurs*, Articles 538 to 565): prostitution, abetment of debauchery and prostitution, indecent assault, and rape (for rape, the sentences established cannot be reduced, cannot prescribe due to any statute of limitation, and cannot be included in an amnesty or pardoned). Moreover, the Government has ratified the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ratified by Law No. 1/05 of 5 April 2012). (Additional Protocol to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime; Palermo Convention, Annex II).

56. To prevent trafficking in women and girls and to improve their economic situation so as to eliminate their vulnerability to exploitation and traffickers, the Government has embarked on a series of crosscutting measures and, in particular:

- Adult literacy through the CDFC to prepare women to work in groups;
- Coaching of women in respect of income-generating activities through training in occupations other than agriculture, especially commerce, making soaps, bakery, fish smoking, and so on;
- Building of community solidarity chains through cattle and smallstock grants in the provinces of Ngozi, Muramvya, Bururi Cankuzo, Bujumbura Rural and Karuzi;
- The granting of micro-loans to 529 women's groups in communes in the provinces of Bubanza, Cibitoke, Bujumbura Rural and Bujumbura Mairie;
- The socio-economic reintegration project for persons affected by the conflict; and so on.

57. The Committee invited Burundi "to provide, in its next periodic report, detailed information on trafficking in women and girls, on the criminalization of the exploitation of prostitution of women, on the protection, recovery, as well as reintegration programmes for victims of exploitation and trafficking" (**Paragraph 28**). Under the Criminal Code in force since 2009, the exploitation of prostitution is a criminal offence. Detailed information is hard to come by on the complex phenomenon of trafficking in persons.

58. When the country was at war, there was trafficking of young girls taken to Lebanon. According to the judicial inquiries under way, there are thought to have been 300 victims of that trafficking. Judicial proceedings have begun but are being obstructed by insufficient cooperation from the country hosting the victims.

59. Since 2010, according to police sources, young girls have been victims of trafficking in the sub-region. By the end of the first half of 2012, 24 case files had been passed to the police (Table No.2. Number of judicial files opened between 2010 and 2013. See Annex).

60. The Committee urged Burundi "to amend article 539 of the draft revised Penal Code to ensure that prostitutes under 18 years of age and those who are victims of trafficking are not punished but can benefit from protection measures" (**Paragraph 28**). Article 539 of the Criminal Code establishes that:

61. *"Whoever has violated public morals to satisfy the passions of another person or persons by instigating, abetting or facilitating debauchery, corruption, and the prostitution of persons of either sex aged or apparently aged 21 and over shall be sentenced to between one and five years imprisonment and a fine of between fifty thousand and two hundred thousand francs.*

62. *The sentence shall be between five and ten years' imprisonment if the person who is the object of the debauchery, corruption or prostitution is under 21 years of age.*

63. *In the absence of a civil identity record, the age of the victim may be determined by medical examination."*

64. The provision is interpreted broadly, whereby minors are regarded as not being criminally liable up to the age of 15.

Part II: Political and public life, representation and nationality (Articles 7 to 9)

Article 7

65. The Committee reminded the Burundian State "to ensure that the truth and reconciliation process is conducted in compliance with the provisions of the Convention and that women are involved in the process on an equal footing with men, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1325 (2000)" (**Paragraph 16**). Women have had ample participation, through the transitional justice mechanisms, in the reconciliation process under way, particularly in the stages already completed, i.e., the Tripartite Commission for organizing nationwide consultations regarding those mechanisms and in the consultations themselves, as well as in the Technical Committee responsible for preparing the transitional justice mechanisms (Decree No. 100/152 of 13 June 2011 on the appointment of members of the Technical Committee in charge of preparing implementation of the transitional justice mechanisms).

66. Sitting on the Tripartite (Government – United Nations – Civil Society) Commission were two Burundian women, two Burundian men, and two United Nations representatives. It published its report in 2011. During the consultations, women were consulted to an appropriately representative extent, as indicated in Table 3 (Participation rates by province, forms of consultation and gender. See Annex.)

67. The Technical Committee comprised seven members, two of whom (28.57%) were women. It submitted its report in November 2011. It proposed a preliminary draft law envisaging an 11-member Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CVR). That bill has not yet passed and consequently the Committee members have not yet been appointed. Nevertheless, it has become customary in Burundi to take women's representation into account when it comes to appointing the members of a Commission or Committee of this magnitude. The same will apply to the transitional justice mechanism and other mechanisms, such as the joint special chamber within the judiciary envisaged in the Framework Agreement between the Government and the United Nations.

68. The Committee also recommended that Burundi ensure the implementation of the provision of the Constitution guaranteeing a quota of "at least 30 per cent" for women" (**Paragraph 20**). Burundi has taken care to observe that provision in the Constitution, which provides for at least 30% women in the National Assembly, the Senate, the Government, and community councils. Article 181 of the Electoral Code of 2009 provides that "the Communal Council shall comprise 15 members, including 30% women." That was not the case in 2008 when there were no 30% minimum quotas required by law.

69. Women's participation in the general elections of 2010 (five polls: elections of the members of the communal councils; of the Head of State; lower house members of parliament; senators; and members of the hillside community councils) was greater than men's, as shown in the following Table, which indicates that on average 51.55% of women took part in those elections.

70. They also represented significant progress in women's positioning within elective institutions because no co-option was needed to attain the 30% minimum quotas, unlike the 2005 elections in which women, in particular, had to be co-opted. (Table No. 4. Women's participation at different levels in certain institutions. See Annex.)

71. All these advances were achieved following campaigns conducted by the Government, United Nations agencies in Burundi, civil society women's organizations and international NGOs. Many women were mobilized thanks to the local language slogan "**Mukenyezi, tora kandi witoze**!," which means "**Women, Vote and Get Yourselves Elected**! "Both before and during the period of elections, several awareness campaigns were conducted through the media, meetings, advertising spots, inter-active theatre, etc. aimed at encouraging Burundian women to vote and get themselves elected.

Article 8

72. Women are now far better represented in diplomatic missions abroad than they were in 2008, as Table No. 5 shows (Women's representation in Burundian diplomatic missions. See Annex).

73. The figures show a considerable improvement in the level of representation, from the 12.5% of women in ambassadorial and counsellor positions in 2008. In some posts, the number of women has doubled, as the aforementioned Table shows.

Article 9

74. The Committee had urged "the State to amend the Nationality Code so as to bring it into line with article 9 of the Convention" (**Paragraph 30**). The Government is keen to amend that law along with the texts of other laws capable of advancing women's rights. The Nationality Code is one of those instruments regarding which public opinion is highly sensitive, like the Persons and Family Code and the bill on inheritance, matrimonial property, and gifts. Amending and promulgating any of them will have repercussions for Article 90 of the Convention. For that reason, revision of the Nationality Code will be conducted at the same time as revision of the Persons and Family Code and the aforementioned bill. The Government of Burundi recognizes that these are highly sensitive matters given the patriarchal structure of Burundian society. They will be resolved with gradual changes in the mind-sets being targeted by today's awareness-raising activities.

Part III: Social and economic measures and rural women (Articles 10 to 14)

Article 10

75. "The Committee urges the State party to take measures to eliminate traditional attitudes which perpetuate discrimination and non-conformity with the provisions of article 10 of the Convention" (Paragraph 32). Due to tradition, there are attitudes that perpetuate discrimination, which the Government is attempting to influence in order to conform to the Convention. The actions it has undertaken include:

- On-going broadcasts by the NDERAGAKURA school radio station, which reaches the whole of Burundi with features and reports on education and sensitization regarding the enrolment of girls in school;
- The Government has commissioned a study on the reasons for school dropouts, whereby the underlying hypothesis is that girls drop out in large numbers due to early pregnancy. The Government wishes to adopt measures based on that study;
- A measure allowing girls who become pregnant during their school years to go back to the school after they give birth;
- Training in combating violence against women: 16,000 representatives (including girls) of secondary school pupils, youth associations, and so on.
- Training of school leaders in gender and combating GBV; and so on.

76. Awareness-raising activities are currently under way, targeting local elected officials, men and women in uniform, and members of women's and men's associations and groups.

77. 58. The Committee recommended that the Burundian State "take measures to ensure equal access for girls and women to all levels of education and to ensure the retention of girls in school, including through temporary special measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation 25" (**Paragraph 32**). Measures already taken along these line include, in particular:

- Adoption of a "Gender Equity" strategy in primary and secondary education;
- Institution by the Ministry responsible for primary and secondary education of the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative programme to promote girls' education at all levels;
- Revision of school rules and regulations to ensure that they take girl-specific aspects into account;
- Making primary education cost-free has helped increase the enrolment of girls (Table No. 6. Girl/boy parity in primary schools from 2005 to 2011. See Annex). (Table No. 7. Girl/boy parity in secondary schools from 2005 to 2011. See Annex).

78. Statistics for the 2010-2011 school year show a higher proportion of girls in the primary school girl/boy ratio. That balance has come about as a result of the combination of the aforementioned measures. That trend has been weaker in secondary schools. The Government recently decided to merge the six years of primary education with the first three years of secondary education into one nine-year block as of the 2013-2014 school year. That could correct the secondary school trend, because by the end of the ninth grade girls will have internalized the benefits of education.

79. The Committee "calls on the State party to improve the literacy level of girls and women through the adoption of comprehensive programmes of formal and non-formal education, adult education and training, and the allocation of adequate financial resources" (**Paragraph 32**). The Burundian State has taken several steps to implement this recommendations, including:

- Preparation, validation and endorsement of the Education and Training Sector Development Plan 2009-2016 (PSDEF);
- The design, validation and implementation of the Gender Equity Strategy;
- FSPR II: First strategic area: (i) strengthening of the rule of law, consolidation of good governance and promotion of gender
- Establishment of the Literacy Department at the Ministry for Basic and Secondary Education, Vocational Training and Literacy;
- CDFC participation in adult literacy campaigns; and so on.

80. The Committee encouraged Burundi "to strengthen collaboration with civil society and to seek support from the international community and donors in order to accelerate the implementation of article 10 of the Convention" (**Paragraph 32**). The Government has carried on collaborating with civil society, as is illustrated by:

- Collaboration with religious faiths: charter schools (Catholic, Protestant, Islamic);
- Collaboration with UNICEF, UNESCO, ABEJA (Burundian Association for the Education of Youth and Adults), Action Aid;
- UNFPA support for adolescent and youth access to information on sexual and reproductive health, and access by both women and men to reproductive health and family planning services;
- Collaboration with local NGOs running family planning information, education and communication (IEC) programmes with a view to lowering the fertility rate.

Article 11

81. The Committee had recommended "the adoption of measures to guarantee the implementation of all the provisions of article 11 of the Convention and the implementation of the relevant conventions of the International Labour Organization that have been ratified by Burundi" (**Paragraph 34**).Burundi has taken several steps to implement the Convention through ILO Conventions, especially the Equal Remuneration Convention (No.100), which it ratified on 30 July 1971, the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No.111), which it ratified on 25 June 1995, and so on. These and the other ILO Conventions are incorporated into Law No. 1/28 on the Civil Servants Regulations of 23 August 2006, Law No. 1/037 of 7 July 1992 on the Labour Code and Law No. 1/010 of 16 June 1999 on the Social Security Code.

82. Measures adopted over the past four years include: :

- Establishment of the National Pensions and Occupational Risks Office (ONPR) for civil servants, magistrates and judicial personnel by Decree Law No. 100/52 of 16 March 2010 on the establishment, organization and operations of the National Pensions and Occupational Risks Office (ONPR) for civil servants, magistrates and judicial personnel. This Office attends to the pensions and occupational risks of the aforementioned persons.

- Promulgation of Law No. 1/04 of 27 January 2010 on the restructuring of the regimes governing the pensions and occupational risks of civil servants, magistrates and judicial personnel. These two laws introduce major improvements to social security and pensions.
- Promulgation of the law of 28 April 2011 on overall organization of public administration.
- At its Ninth Ordinary Session, held in Banjul (Gambia) in June 2006, the Executive Council of the African Union had adopted a "Report on the Elaboration of a Framework Document on Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD)" for the African countries concerned, including Burundi. That framework of action calls for the participation of women and gender equality in reforms of the State and governance in post-conflict countries. The Government finalized and, on 25 April 2012, adopted a National Programme for Public Administration Reform (PNRA), which fully conforms to ILO Conventions;
- The Guide to Gender Mainstreaming in Implementation of the PNRA (GIG) was drawn up, based on the PNRA, by the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Security in collaboration with UN-Women, with a view to making a powerful contribution to reconstruction, peace consolidation and development with effective participation by women and taking women's specific needs into account;

83. Through the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Security, the Government promulgated the law of 28 April 2011 on overall organization of public administration, which was then supplemented by the Guide to Gender Mainstreaming (GIG) in Implementation of the PNRA, with a view to advancing and addressing women-specific aspects in their exercise of public and/or elective office and fostering their empowerment, legitimate ambitions and promotion in their professional or political careers. This involves, in particular:

- Including provisions on gender equity in the ratio or quota for women and men in decision-making or management positions;
- Revising provisions on maternity leave and its advantages and variants;
- Rationalizing local offices of the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Public Safety under the authority of the governor and in response to the needs of provinces to ensure that the gender perspective is taken into account.

84. The Committee had asked Burundi "to establish effective mechanisms to oversee compliance with existing legislation, in particular with regard to pregnant women and maternity leave and benefits" (**Paragraph 34**). Article 55 of the Civil Servants Regulations of 23 August 2006 stipulates that "a female civil servant is entitled by law to fourteen weeks maternity leave divided into two parts: one before and one after giving birth." Furthermore, Article 122 of the Labour Code stipulates that "Any pregnant woman whose state of health is certified by a physician may suspend work without prior notice."

85. The Committee has asked Burundi "[to] adopt a gender-sensitive employment policy with respect to women in the informal sectors of the economy" (**Paragraph 34**).Accordingly, Burundi has established a Rural Micro-credit Fund (FMCR) to enable rural populations to benefit from micro loans to provide for their needs. It has encourages the establishment and strengthening of microfinance, including women's microfinance to support rural women as they go about their informal sector activities. It has also encouraged the organization of women engaged in commercial activities, especially the women members of the Association of Businesswomen (AFAB).

86. Women working in the informal sectors of the economy, like all other women earning an income, need to enjoy it to the full. Power to decide what to do with a women's income if one of the indicators of the status of a woman and her level of financial autonomy. In Burundi, 22% of married women earning an income decide for themselves on how to use it, 65% decide on that matter jointly with their husband, while for the remaining 13% it is the husband who mainly decides what is done with that income (Demographic and Health Survey of Burundi -***EDSB-II, 2010***). This poses a challenge that the Government is keen to overcome, but which has to do with the low level of education of both the male and female population. According to the same survey (***EDSB-II, 2010***), women earn less than their husbands. Indeed, 66% of women interviewed consider that that is the case. Only 12% think that they earn more than their husbands, while 18% think they earn the same.

87. The Ministry of National Solidarity, Human Rights and Gender, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, and the Ministry of Trade , Industry, Postal Services and Tourism, has requested support from UN-Women to conduct a study of economic opportunities open to women in Burundi. That study is currently under way. It is focusing mainly on the chains and niches in which Burundian women work, their potential and opportunities, the challenges they face, and effective strategies for developing their economic initiatives.

Article 12

88. The Committee has urgently requested Burundi "to continue its efforts to improve the country's health infrastructure" (**Paragraph 36**). The Government has done so. In fact, the State's health care subsidies for children under five, pregnant women and women in childbirth have extended access and the need to expand infrastructure at the same pace and within reach of the beneficiaries. Today, it is clear that there has been an increase in health infrastructure between 2008 and 2012. (Table No. 8. Number of health infrastructure facilities. See Annex).

89. The Committee had called upon Burundi "to integrate a gender perspective into all health sector reforms and to implement fully article 12 of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation 24" (**paragraph 36**). The Government has embarked on equity-oriented health sector reforms and sought to overcome cultural barriers in medical consultations. To that end, it has appointed more women to positions of responsibility than ever before, as Table No. 9 shows (Share of women in positions of responsibility in the Ministry of Public Health and Efforts to Combat AIDS. See Annex).

90. Although it remains low, the proportion of women in positions of responsibility has improved from single to double digits. Certain factors throw light on this state of affairs. Above all, women still find it difficult to work far from urban centres. They prefer to stay close to their family, rather than to hold positions of responsibility in remote health districts. Thus, of the 44 people in charge of health districts, only one is a woman.

91. The Committee has recommended that the Burundian State "take appropriate measures to improve women's access to health care and health-related services" (**Paragraph 36**). Numerous steps have been taken in that direction, including, in particular, the following:

- Since April 2010, performance-based financing built into reimbursement of the cost-free care package for women who are pregnant or giving birth has been extended, on an equal footing, to the whole of the country and has helped improve the quality of services provided for women;
- Establishment of a training program for midwives at the National Institute of Public Health (INSP) with a view to supplying health facilities with well-trained midwives;

- Motivation of health care officers and midwives responsible for monitoring pregnant women and people who drop out of the health care provided at health centres (CDS): for instance, tuberculosis patients and dropouts from child vaccination and pregnant women health care programs;
- Installation of secondary health posts providing family planning services close to faith-based facilities that do not provide them;
- Redeployment of surplus health care personnel in urban areas to rural areas that were deprived of such personnel, in such a way that everyone has access to health care, especially women, including pregnant women and women giving birth,.

92. The Committee had called upon Burundi "to improve the availability of sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning information and services, as well as access to antenatal, post-natal and obstetric services, so as to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of reducing maternal mortality" (**Paragraph 36**). The Burundian State has continued to provide and improve those services, by adopting, in particular, the following measures:

- The establishment of secondary health posts to solve the geographical access issues and to make up for the absence of family planning services not provided by public health centres;
- Family planning services and antenatal and post-natal check-ups are cost-free;
- Training for family planning providers;
- Training of family planning providers, especially in long-acting contraceptive methods (implants and IUDs), in order to expand the range of options;
- Training in reviews of maternal deaths aimed at improving the quality of services and maternal care provided to women at every level;
- Reproductive health care standards have already been validated and protocols exist for each level for determining the actions to be undertaken at each level of care;
- School supervisors are also being coached regarding the young people's sexuality. Training courses have been organized for them.

93. All these services are paid for in full by the State. The results are encouraging, as certain indicators in Table No. 10 show (Some indicators of the state of women's health. See Annex).

94. The fact that pregnancy-related services are provided free of charge, combined with performance-based financing and capacity-building in the health care system, has increased use of RH services and helped reduce maternal mortality. Thus, the maternal mortality rate has been falling in Burubdi since 1990. It has fallen at a rate 30 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births per year, yielding an overall reduction of 54.5% between 1990 and 2010. The number of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births in 2010 was estimated at 500. The ratio of births assisted by a professional rose from 17.8% in 2000 to 64.4% in 2011. As for family planning, the available data point to increasing use of modern methods of contraception: from 4% in 1990 to 21.9% in 2011. That trend has to do above all with political commitment and support from partners, the absence of any contraceptive stock-outs since 2006, more intense communication regarding the need to change family planning behaviour and practices, the training given to providers on long-action (implant and IUD) contraceptive methods, and performance-based financing. Nevertheless, unsatisfied family planning needs – i.e. the percentage of women who would like to use a contraceptive method to prevent or delay

having a child remains high (31% according to the 2010 Demographic and Health Survey (EDS-2010).

95. The Committee called upon Burundi "to establish family development centres in all the provinces and to provide them with adequate financial resources and qualified staff" **(Paragraph 36)**.The Government has continued it programme for establishing family development centres (CDF) throughout the country. Whereas in 2008 there were only 12 CDFC in 12 provinces, today there are 17 CDF in 17 provinces.

96. As for the non-wage financial resources provided to the CDFC by the State, see Table No. 11. Non-wage Financial Resources provided by the State (in the Annex).

97. The Committee "encourages the State party to seek technical support from the United Nations Population Fund in the above-mentioned areas" (Paragraph 36). The CDF receive UNFPA funding. After temporarily suspending its funding, UNFPA has again been providing assistance for the past two years and now finances 8 CDF, as opposed to 2. In addition to the CDFC, UNFPA continues to back the "Project to Support the Advancement of Women" or "Gender Component" in empowerment of women activities, through solidarity chains in livestock farming, women's or mixed associations, and knowledge-building through awareness and information campaigns regarding instruments and laws for the protection of human rights, family planning, and so on. UNFPA supports CDF activities designed to combat GBV, by taking in, counselling, orienting/assisting and referring victims to specialized services, gathering data on GBV, and coordinating actions in the provinces and communes to promote gender equity and equality. According to its new strategic plan, UNFPA's next actions will aim to promote laws for achieving gender equity and equality (a law specifically addressing GBV; inheritance, matrimonial property and gifts; the amendment of laws containing discriminatory provisions, and so on), as well as medical care in NGOs and health centres for victims of gender-based violence.

98. With respect to sex education, the Committee had recommended that "sex education focusing on the control of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS be widely promoted and targeted at girls and boys" **(Paragraph 38)**. Burundi has long been conducting sex education programmes through its school curricula and the media. In schools, those activities are organized by "Stop AIDS" clubs. There is also a National Reproductive Health Programme which runs programmes targeting both girls and boys. The Ministry of Public Health and the Fight against AIDS has prepared a national plan to improve the quality of basic and complete emergency delivery, neonatal and reproductive health services, which was followed in 2007 by preparation of the National Reproductive Health Policy which has a special focus on easy-to-understand sex education activities in youth centres. With UNFPA support, starting in 2008, the National Reproductive Health Programme has adopted an approach aimed at improving user-friendly services for young people and adolescents (girls and boys) in 10 "Friends of Young People" public health centres, as well as for a for young people established by ABUBEF since 2004 through its branches in seven provinces. These centres provide HIV screening services, diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and reproductive health counselling. A study is under way to take stock of the situation and propose improvement strategies. One of the priorities in the new National Plan for the Development of Health Care is to strengthen the provision in health facilities of user-friendly services for youths and adolescents.

99. 78. The Committee has urged Burundi "to ensure the implementation of HIV/AIDS prevention policies and to seek technical assistance in this regard from the World Health Organization and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS" **(Paragraph 38)**. Burundi has frequently adopted measures with the assistance of international organizations,

such as the WHO and UNAIDS. These measures have made it possible to discern a decline in the HIV/AIDS seroprevalence rate. In 1989, it was 1% in rural areas and 15% in urban areas. The national seroprevalence rate was 3.2% in 2002 and 2.9% in 2007. In 2010, the seroprevalence rate was 1.7% for women and 1% for men. The rate is higher for women than for men (170 women for every 100 men). Burundi is attaching particular importance to programmes aimed at reducing this rate.

Article 13

100. With respect to this article, there have been developments regarding family benefit. In Burundi, the social benefits system is still incipient. In fact, as a social protection system, social benefits or social transfers by the State in cash or in kind to individuals or families to cover outlays for social purposes, in particular those related to health, the family, unemployment, disability, and so on are still embryonic and take the form of assistance for the very poor. Such assistance is sporadic and is slowly beginning to become organized. For instance, the Burundian State pays all medical expenses for the very poor and school fees for needy children. It is also broadening use of health insurance cards, and so on. That constitutes progress toward developing social benefits as part of a social protection system. Nevertheless, the Burundian State is hampered by lack of the resources needed to ensure that social benefits keep pace with needs.

101. Right of access to bank loans remains unaltered and women enjoy the same access to credit as men. The number of women receiving loans continues to grow. Thanks to guarantee funds, the "Home for Women of Burundi" project enabled women members of associations to have access to low-interest loans from microfinance institutions. However, in general, access to credit for both men and women is scant, due to widespread poverty.

102. . As for women's participation in recreational activities, sports and all other aspects of cultural life, it continues to grow in urban areas, where it is a function of the level of education: the higher the level of a woman's education, the narrower the participation gap vis-à-vis men. In competitive sports, there is a women's championship in all the organized sports practiced in Burundi, although the percentage of women taking part is still low. In mass sports in urban areas, there has been notable progress from a gender perspective thanks to sensitization activities, so much so that the Sports Ministry estimates that women's participation is 40%. In football, for instance, which is traditionally regarded as a male sport, the President of Burubdi's Football Federation is a woman: Mrs Lydia Sekera. She is also a member of the International Olympic Committee and the Executive Committee of FIFA and holds several other positions in African football management bodies. Burundi has already won Olympic medals thanks to women's participation in the Olympic Games, including the most recent, in London, where Ms Francine Niyonsaba won the silver medal in the women's 800 metre race.

103. While the trend is positive, women's participation in the various sports played in rural areas is still low (even men's participation in rural areas has not developed significantly due to the lack of infrastructure as a result of poverty). In contrast, women's participation in cultural life is significant. Women play a prominent part in the cultural life of communities in both rural and urban areas. It is worth noting that Burundian culture provides for women's cultural activities and men's cultural activities as well as joint activities.

Article 14

104. The Committee had requested that the Burundian State "take note that these recommendations also apply particularly to rural women" (**Paragraph 10**). Despite financial

constraints, the Government is aware of this concern. Women make up the majority of the agricultural workforce. Thus, to ensure the empowerment of rural women, the Government has, among other steps, proceeded to increase the budget allocation to agriculture and livestock production. In 2008, the budget share of the Ministry responsible for these two sectors was less than 2%. In 2011 it was 6.2% and nearly doubled in 2012 to 11.8% of the national budget. Moreover, given the difficulty women have in accessing credit, the SFPR II includes establishment of a fund to finance women's agricultural activities in rural areas as a major ingredient in a strategy aimed at improving agricultural output.

105. With a view to promoting grassroots community participation in development programmes, the Government has established community mechanisms: the Communal Community Development Committees (CCDC) and the Hillside Community Development Committees (CDC) to support the Communal Council and Hillside Community Councils, respectively. Ministerial Order No. 530/10182/CAB OF 31 December 2007, which instituted them, specifies that women's representation on both Committees must be at least 30%. It is not always easy to achieve those minimum levels of representation.

106. To remedy that, the Government has taken several steps, including:

- Numerous awareness-raising campaigns to induce women to become actively involved in the 2010 electoral process and to participate in community life;
- Training/sensitization of local authorities, members of the Communal Development Committees, local elected leaders, and heads of associations in gender issues and gender mainstreaming in community development communal programmes;
- For several years now, International Women's Day has always afforded an opportunity to push for greater participation of women. In 2010, it was celebrated with an eloquent slogan: *Men and women have an equal right to participate in decision-making bodies. "Femme, élis et fais toi élire"* ["Women, elect and get yourselves elected!"].

107. To address the needs of rural women, the Government has made considerable efforts since the last report in 2008 and the results have been notable, particularly as regards basic services provided to the population, of which women are the main beneficiaries. These include:

- Efforts to facilitate rural women's access to drinking water. During the war, 30% of the infrastructure used to supply drinking water was destroyed. Drinking water supply coverage fell from 70% of the population before the war to 40% in 2008. Today, it is back to 70% and the Government's goal is to expand it to 83% by 2015 and 100% by 2020.
- In 2009, the Government adopted the National Water Policy which, as far as planning is concerned, envisages participation by the population, and women in particular, in decision-making at every level with regard to water and sanitation. The same policy also envisages applying equity and solidarity principles to ensure that the poor and other vulnerable groups have access to water and sanitation services so as to meet their basic needs at an affordable price. With that in mind, lower rates will be charged to these groups and facilities provided for connecting them to water supply networks.
- The resettlement in villages ("villagisation") policy as a tool for improving housing is also capable of improving living conditions in general and those of women in particular. It comes with measures that facilitate access to basic services, including water, electricity, health facilities, and so on. Indeed, 100 villages were built between 2008 and 2012.

108. Other Government initiatives illustrating its concern for rural women are reflected in the large-scale Government projects financed by international donors and creditors. They include, for instance, the following programmes:

- The Rural Recovery and Development Programme (PRDMR), financed by the Government, IFAD and OPEC. An important component of the programme involves improving women's well-being;
- The Agricultural Intensification and Value-enhancing Support Project (PAIVA I and II)
- The Transitional Programme of Post-Conflict Reconstruction (PTRPC), which covers three provinces and has a "support for local governance" component. It includes training and briefing women regarding their rights and the provision of legal assistance, when needed;
- The Rural Microcredit Fund, which continues to make loans to women;
- The Transitional Programme of Post-Conflict Reconstruction (PTRPC), financed by IFAD, is being implemented according to IFAD's development philosophy and strategic framework, which involves "enabling the poor rural people to overcome poverty." This programme's numerous activities genuinely target rural areas and include a gender perspective.

109. Its achievements include the following components: "Local Governance", Rehabilitation and the Development of Agriculture", "Rehabilitation and the Development of Rural Infrastructure", and "Programme Coordination." Women are included in all the groups targeted in projects pertaining to the first four components. For example, the first component has a sub-component entitled "Regeneration of Rural Women's Livelihoods" where women are the principal beneficiaries, as indicated in the PTRPC's 2010 Annual Report. Activities conducted under that sub-component include, for instance:

- Adult literacy programmes, in which 70% of those targeted are women;
- Collective education of rural women and combating AIDS: 860 Information, Education and Communication (IEC) sessions, 6 workshops on women's days, 3 campaigns on efforts to combat violence against women, with the participation of 1,161 victims of violence, 79% of whom are women who benefited from listening and counselling sessions;
- Income-generating activities: Two microfinance institutions (Wise and Twitezimbere) have been recruited to grant loans to associations and 46 female (61.33%) and 29 male representatives of associations have been trained for that purpose;
- Vocational training for young orphans taken out of school. Of the 470 youths who received training, 235 (50%) were girls; and so on.

110. For its part, the 2011 Annual Report of the PTRPC shows that many more women than men are benefiting from the income-generating project activities. Indeed, in communes in the Bujumbura and Bururi provinces where the PTRPC is active, following related training activities, loans have been granted to groups in which most of the members are women, as Table No. 12 illustrates (Number of beneficiaries of loans granted by the PTRPC. See Annex).

111. The 2008 General Population and Housing Census showed that women accounted for 21.5% of land owners. This percentage has been growing following awareness-raising activities and actions to empower rural women through the development and reconstruction projects currently under way. Thus, Burundi's 2012 National Farm Survey showed the share of women land owners had increased to 28.4%.

112. While encouraging, that share remains low because of the persistence of traditional practices that hamper such access for women. The Government is conscious of the situation and doing what it can to change it through sensitization and information activities.

113. The Government's determination to reduce poverty through a gender-specific approach is illustrated by the Strategic Framework for Growth and Poverty Reduction (SFGP II), which serves as its frame of reference on development matters and which illustrates the Government's commitment to incorporate gender in poverty reduction. Indeed, the SFGP II states:

114. *"In order to avoid exacerbating inequalities detrimental to women and advance toward more equitable arrangements, it is advisable to promote equitable access to the factors of production and to strengthen women's capacities and enhance their performance. To that end, the Government plans to establish conditions conducive to better access to resources and better control over those resources, to a greater contribution by women to the socio-economic development of the country, and to capacity-building for women so that they can gain more from the spin-offs of development."*

115. As for social protection, the National Social Protection Policy adopted by the Government of Burundi in April 2011 covers five types of protection:

- Access to health care;
- Retirement allowances (pensions);
- survivor's pensions ;
- Compensation for accidents at work and occupational diseases;
- Family allowances.

116. Social protection systems, above all for rural areas, are rudimentary in terms of both coverage and the types of benefits offered. The rural population's access to the social protection system is very largely thwarted by lack of financial resources and, above all, organization.

117. With a view to mitigating this problem, the National Social Protection Policy establishes short, medium and long-term objectives. For the informal and rural sector, the short-term objectives include:

(i) Organizing and supporting the population through income-generating activities, by endowing with the necessary resources through appropriate mechanisms, such as microfinance;

(ii) Establishing mutually reinforcing links between growth and social protection programmes;

(iii) Promoting individual and community provident schemes;

(iv) Helping the rural population and the informal economy to establish health insurance systems, and getting at least 50% of the target population in the informal sector and 40% of the target population in the rural sector to enrol in them by 2015;

(v) Organizing access to those health insurance systems for the very poor and vulnerable;

(vi) Building a culture of social risks prevention and preventive health care into community development programmes;

(vii) Helping to reduce poverty and vulnerability through effective management of social risks;

(viii) Promoting equity and social justice through social integration and equal opportunities for development; and

(ix) Setting up a family allowances system.

118. The medium-term objectives have to do with:

(i) Inscribing at least 80% of informal sector workers and 70% of the rural population in health insurance systems and individual and collective provident or social security schemes; and

(ii) Establishing or expanding the pensions and occupational hazards regime to cover population groups in the informal sector and the rural sector, particularly vulnerable groups.

119. Long-term goals include:

(i) Enrolment of all informal and rural sector workers in the health insurance systems and individual provident or social security systems; and

(ii) The achievement of universal health insurance for all Burundian citizens.

120. This policy is still at the early stages and it is too soon to evaluate its implementation. Nevertheless, medical care coverage using the health insurance card (CAM) is, notably, already a reality on the ground.

121. Regarding access to loans, as underscored in the previous report, "*With respect to bank loans, Burundian women enjoy this right on an equal footing with men. Since the previous report, the number of loans granted to women has increased, and the nature of the loans has extended to commercial and home loans.*" Overall, given the country's poverty, there is no widespread access to loans. The development of banking services is still incipient. They reach approximately 3.7% of the adult population. That affects everybody, rural women in particular.

122. The banking services coverage rate will increase steeply as a result of the spread of mobile telephony. Mobile telephone companies have introduced the use of mobile phone to open bank accounts and expedite cash transfers. Today, that practice has become highly popular (Ecocash, Mobicash, Poste, Leomanoti, etc.), so much so that, in the medium term, the banking services availability rate could easily increase tenfold, according to bankers.

123. Before they are implemented, most of the above-mentioned projects start with topical studies of the needs of the local population. They highlight the needs of rural women who have helped assemble projects benefiting women. In addition, a general study is under way to identify opportunities for women nationwide. That study is being supported by UN-Women. Moreover, the Ministry of Agriculture is putting the finishing touches to a gender strategy to be incorporated in its programs.

124. The Committee "urges the State party to ensure that they [women] have access to health care, education, justice, clean water, electricity, land and microcredit" (**Paragraph 40**).The Government is conscious of this need and has implemented the recommendation through its access to basic services policies (**see paragraphs 107 to 109, 122, 126 to 132, 144 and 145**).

125. The Committee called on Burundi "to elaborate poverty reduction strategies integrating a gender perspective and also taking account of the specific needs of older women." This is being done through the Strategic Framework for Growth and Poverty

Reduction (SFGP II). That paper provides guidelines for taking gender into account, and rural women in particular, in many walks of life.

126. In the agricultural sector, for example, the SFGP II plans to restructure output. To do so, the Government should encourage the promotion of farmers' organizations capable of defending their members' interests. The SFGP II also envisages the development of microfinance institutions and promotion of community banks managed in collaboration with professional organizations in order to address some of the needs of farmers. In that connection, and bearing in mind the difficulty women have in accessing loans, the Government has made arrangements for a fund to be established to finance the agricultural activities of women in rural areas.

127. Another objective pursued in the SFGP II is for the Government and its donors and creditors to play a leading role in the mobilization of the resources needed to enable microfinance institutions to finance their operations at affordable rates, paying particular heed to women entrepreneurs. The measures envisaged to achieve that objective are: training those involved in providing support services; amending laws in such a way as to allow Burundian women to have access to family assets to be used as collateral; and raising financing from donors and creditors that is tailored to the specific constraints of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and enterprises managed by women.

128. In the energy sector, Burundian rural women face considerable hardship because they bear most of the burden of gathering firewood. Government actions envisaged in the SFGP II involve boosting energy supplies through energy projects, including the construction of hydroelectric plants and promotion of new and renewable sources of energy (biogas, solar, geothermal, peat and micro hydroelectricity plants).

129. Access to energy is not keeping up with demand by the population. Demand is strong, but the subscription rate is low and growing only slightly. The Government is currently taking steps to boost the supply of energy as much as possible and to increase the number of connections to the grid (Table No. 13: Increase in electricity access rates between 2005 and 2011. See Annex).

130. Actions are being undertaken to increase the supply and output of energy, especially:

- The start in May 2012 of construction work on the 10 MW Mpanda hydroelectric plant;
- The start on 30 August 2012 of construction work and management of the 20 MW hydroelectric plant on the Kaburantwa River (KABU 16);
- The expansion and adjustment of the Bujumbura thermal power plant, scheduled to increase output from 5.5 MW to 10 MW this year;
- Construction of the 500 Kw Kayongozi micro plant and rehabilitation of the 150 Kw Murore micro plant;
- The signing of contracts, memoranda of understanding and letters of intent:

At the local level:

- Concession agreement for construction of the 12 MW hydroelectric plant on the Kagunuzi River (KAGU 06);
- Negotiations under way with the European Investment Bank (BEI) and the World Bank for financing contracts for 50 MW hydroelectric plants on the Jiji and Mulembwe Rivers;

- Negotiations are also under way to finance a 10 MW hydroelectric plant on the Ruzibazi River.

At the regional level

- Obtaining financing from the BEI and Kredit für Wiederaufbau (KFW) for rehabilitation work on the Ruzuz II plant (46 MW, including 15 MW for Burundi);
- Selection of three enterprises to finance construction of the RUZIZI III hydroelectric plant under a public-private partnership arrangement (147 MW, including 49 for Burundi).

131. Access to drinking water is another problem facing rural women, who have to go a long way to fetch it. To address this constraint, the SFGP II envisages Government actions based on the National Water Policy (PNE) and the National Water Strategy. The PNE seeks to ensure sustainable coverage of all users' water needs through harmonious development of water resources. The maintain objectives are to:

(i) Increase rates of access to drinking water to a point at which they achieve MDGs in 2015; and

(ii) Ensure access to water for the poor and vulnerable.

132. The resettlement in villages ("villagisation") programme envisaged in the SFGP II will enable rural women to have access to basic social services and promote female entrepreneurship.

Equality, marriage and family relations (Articles 15 and 16)

Article 15

133. The Committee had asked Burundi "to remove the impediments that women may face in gaining access to justice and ... to seek aid from the international community for the implementation of concrete measures to this effect" (**Paragraph 16**).The laws in force in Burundi proclaim that everyone is equal before the law. Article 22 of the Constitution guarantees equal protection with no distinction between men and women and they have the same right to legal remedy. However, given the lack of a law on inheritance, marital property and gifts (SRML), women are restricted in their entitlement to legal remedy because the tendency is to resort to custom. Nevertheless, the fact that there is no law on SRML tends to put men and women on an equal footing with respect to judgments handed down by courts and tribunals. Custom has lost ground vis-à-vis equality between men and women. The study under way on the impact on men, women and the community of not having a law regulating SRML and the value-added that would derive from the existence of such a law could throw enough light on the issue and enable that law to be adopted. It is also worth noting that an amendment of the Persons and Family Code is currently being drafted.

134. The Committee had called on Burundi "to organize an awareness-raising campaign in order to educate rural chiefs about the new laws to ensure their effective implementation" (**Paragraph 14**). The Government has already made it a priority to conduct awareness campaigns for the population at all levels, including rural chiefs (communal and hillside community councils, as well as community leaders, including members of civil society organizations). These campaigns mainly revolve around major and, for public opinion, very sensitive laws, such as the Code of Persons and the Family and the bill on inheritance, marital property and gifts. The campaigns have been conducted in all the provinces.

Article 16

135. The Committee had recommended that Burundi adopt "a uniform family code ensuring de jure and de facto equality for women with regard to inheritance, matrimonial regimes and gifts, and that it ensure its effective implementation, particularly in rural areas" (Paragraph 14). The Government has undertaken awareness-raising activities for the whole population regarding the bill on inheritance, marital property and gifts. They are designed to alter mind-sets and win people over to innovations that do not necessarily match certain practices. The Government is bent on refining its strategy for conducting these activities systematically in order to reduce still frequent social resistance to them. On that methodological approach, ***see paragraph 111 regarding the study currently under way***. It is going to serve as an important tool for raising awareness among the population.

136. The Committee had called upon Burundi "to organize an awareness-raising campaign in orde. to educate rural chiefs about the new laws to ensure their effective implementation" (**Paragraph 14**). Regarding actions in this area, ***cf. the response in paragraph 134***.)

Part V: Specific measures against GBV

137. The Committee requested the Burundian State "to make use of the Committee's general recommendation 19 in its efforts to combat violence against women and also of the Secretary-General's in-depth study on all forms of violence against women (A/61/122/Add.1 and Corr. 1), in particular the good practices identified in the study" (**Paragraph 24**). Burundi shares the Committee's concerns. It has responded in the form of several measures already adopted. For instance, in response to this recommendation, Burundi has adopted several nationwide measures aimed at eradicating violence against women and caring for the victims. These are, above all:

1. The national study on violence against women during the conflict.
2. Formulation of a national strategy on gender-based violence and its plan of action.
3. Inclusion of the GBV problem in the SFGP II.
4. Establishment of a budget allocation to combat GBV.
5. The recent opening in Gitega of a pilot centre providing comprehensive care to victims of GBV (the Humura Centre in Gitega).
6. The amendment of the Criminal Code (Law No. 1/05 of 22 April 2009 amending the Criminal Code) to include severe punishments for perpetrators of GBV and the current revision of the Code of Criminal Procedure.
7. The signing of the Kampala Declaration (December 2011) on combating GBV.

138. The Committee had urged the Burundian State "to adopt a comprehensive strategy to combat all forms of violence against women" (**Paragraph 24**).Burundi has embarked on reforms constituting public responses to the problem as well as comprehensive strategies, such as the National Action Plan (PAN) on Resolution 1325 adopted by the Council of Ministers, the National Strategy Paper on Gender-Based Violence, and so on.

139. This strategy is the culmination of a long process initiated by the Ministry Responsible for Human Rights and Gender. It is the fruit of a joint effort by the Government of Burundi, United Nations agencies, NGOs, and the Leagues and Associations working to

combat gender-based violence. Today, a multisectoral approach inspired by the aforementioned national strategy and its triennial action plan has been agreed upon by all stakeholders and is currently being implemented.

140. The evaluation of what is needed to achieve MDG No. 3, Africa's new priorities pursuant to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the National Action Plan to Address Resolution 1325 (December 2011), Resolution 1820, the protocol on combating violence of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), the SFGP II and the National Gender Policy are all achievements that pave the way for implementation of the comprehensive strategy to combat all forms of violence against women. An ever closer partnership with both governmental and nongovernmental organization is forming to address this matter.

141. The Committee also encouraged Burundi "to consider the campaign for the elimination of violence against women launched by the Secretary-General" (**Paragraph 24**). Pursuant to that encouragement, ever since November 2008, during the 16-day campaigns of activities calling for an end to violence against women, the Ministry Responsible for Gender Issues, in collaboration with its partners, organizes nationwide awareness campaigns on the struggle to end violence against women. These campaigns are well publicised in the media and achieve extensive participation by the general public. That is an appropriate opportunity to relay the U.N. Secretary General's campaign.

142. Furthermore, as part of that campaign, a climb of Kilimanjaro was organized from 5 to 9 March 2012, in which Burundi took part For its part, on March 10 2012, the Ministry Responsible for Gender Issues, together with its partners, organized a climb up Mount Heha (the highest peak in Burundi) to echo the Kilimanjaro climb campaign. Along the same lines, on 27 and 28 November 2012, Burundi hosted an international conference on the role of the police in combating violence against women and girls.

143. The Committee invited Burundi "to raise public awareness, through the media and education programmes, that all forms of violence against women are unacceptable" (**Paragraph 24**). The activities referred to in the foregoing paragraph were extensively covered by the media, which broadcast programs on the efforts to combat violence against women and published articles on GBV and the campaigns to eliminate it. Spots and posters were also produced. In schools, the Government supports and encourages the "Stop AIDS" clubs, which organize activities to combat GBV. Annual workshops targeting the media are organized on the subject of fighting GBV. In October 2012, a comprehensive training programme on gender issues was organized with support from UN-Women.

144. The Committee called on Burundi "to train the judiciary, law enforcement officials, legal professionals, social workers and health providers so as to ensure that the perpetrators of violence against women are prosecuted and punished, and to provide victims with gender-sensitive support." The Ministry of Justice has already established a Professional Training Centre for the Justice Sector (CFPJ). Training courses on violence against women are being conducted for the judiciary, law enforcement officials and legal professionals so that the Ministry of Justice can effectively fight this scourge by punishing the perpetrators.

145. Within the framework of the implementation of the National Strategy to Combat GBV, the Ministries of Justice, Health, Public Safety, the Interior, Primary and Secondary Education and Human rights all organize activities related to efforts to end violence against women. The main activities already carried out are:

- Establishment of a specialized unit to address GBV;

- The appointment of Judicial Police Officers (OPJ) as "Gender Focus Points" in all police stations (147 focus points);
- The appointment of "GBV focus points" in prosecutors' offices and district courts (TGI);
- A workshop for high-ranking National Police officers to reflect on their part in combating GBV and in gender mainstreaming in police reform;
- Organization of an annual campaign to raise awareness among girls in secondary schools and universities about the possibility of a career in the National Police of Burundi;
- Training of members of a team responsible for coordinating police interventions and monitoring them at every level;
- Organization of meetings between the police and community leaders;
- Permanent efforts to raise awareness of GBV among policemen in each provincial police station throughout the country;
- Training for OPJ on gender-related laws and regulations;
- Drafting of a police training package on preventing and cracking down on GBV;
- Appointment, monitoring and training of legal assistants (*accompagnants juridiques*);
- Judicial assistance for victims of gender-based violence in all communes;
- Dissemination of the Criminal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure in Kirundi among influential leaders (especially regarding the punishments for GBV);
- National Workshop for criminal justice system actors on the issue of cracking down on gender-based violence;
- Training of 85 focus points in prosecutors' offices (2 x 17 provinces) and district courts (3 x 17 provinces) from all over the country, in two groups;
- Workshop to raise awareness about the need to pass a specific law on gender-based violence;
- Organization of a workshop to reflect on the establishment of a legal aid fund;
- Organization of a self-evaluation meeting of focus points and Ministry of Justice supervisors on improving the handling of GBV cases;
- Organization of a training workshop for physicians on the medical protocol for rape cases and to reflect on the referral system and issuance of the medical certificate;
- Organization of a training course for nurses acting as GBV focus points in health care centres;
- Preparation of a training package for judges on the subject of GBV;
- Training the trainers of judges on the subject of GBV;
- Preparation of a capacity-building plan to strengthen the crackdown on GBV;
- Organization of several workshops to raise awareness of the need to prevent GBV and to provide psychological and social help to its victims, targeting local elected officials (members of communal and hillside councils), community leaders, religious leaders,

women heads of associations and social workers in partner organizations in all the country's provinces;

- Awareness-raising among community leaders regarding the provisions in the Criminal Code that punish GBV, with a view to preventing such violence and getting them, in turn, to inform the local population about its right to have access to justice.

146. The Committee called on Burundi "to enhance access to justice for victims, including victims of armed conflict, and to take steps to provide them with legal, medical and psychological support" (**Paragraph 24**). In that context, the Government and certain partner organizations do provide psychological and social, medical, legal, and judicial support, as well as assistance with social and economic reintegration, community assistance, and so on. A "zero tolerance" policy is adopted in efforts to combat GBV. That is evidenced by the speed with which the police and judicial departments process GBV case files. To facilitate access to justice for victims of GBV, the Ministry of Justice has established a Cabinet-level Commission to combat GBV and installed GBV focus points in all the country's District Courts and Prosecutors' Offices, so as to ensure that they give priority to processing GBV cases. Furthermore, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry Responsible for Gender issues provide, through their partners, legal aid to GBV victims, by helping them with the transportation of their witnesses to court.

147. The Committee urged the Burundian State "to enact legislation on domestic violence and all forms of gender-based violence" (**Paragraph 24**). The Council of Ministers already analysed, on 14 August 2012, a bill on the prevention, protection against, and suppression of gender-based violence and on care for victims. That bill is the product of a lengthy participatory process all those involved in this field in government and in NGOs. It entailed numerous preparatory meetings, including meetings of reflection, meetings to exchange views, research and studies, and so on. In particular, it entailed:

- The workshop on the advisability of a law specifically addressing gender-based violence;
- The drafting and validation of the preliminary bill;
- Nationwide consultation to support the process of applying to Burundi the ICGLR Protocol on the Prevention and Repression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children;
- The work of the Follow-Up Committee: numerous meetings on implementation of the advocacy plan of action and on the contents of the law (on 20/10/2010, 17/11/2010, 30/5/2011, etc.);
- On 24/6/2011: transmission of the document by the President of the Follow-Up Committee to the Minister Responsible for Gender Issues and the Minister of Justice, followed by a press release;
- Provincial consultation workshops on the GBV situation in countries pertaining to the ICGLR.
- The national consultation workshop to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the scope of the crime of GBV, with the motto: "United to Prevent, to Put an End to Impunity."

148. The Committee asked Burundi "to provide information in its next report on the laws, policies and programmes in place to eradicate all forms of violence against women, as well as statistical data and trends concerning the prevalence of such violence" (**Paragraph 24**).This

has been done, in terms of the laws and programmes cited in the foregoing paragraph (***paragraph 147***). As for statistical data, the following initiatives have been taken:

- The establishment of a unit to centralize and manage a database on GBC, following a workshop held on 2 December 2009 to achieve definitive validation of the country's data-collection capacity (*l'outil national*). The Ministry Responsible for Gender Issues had, with support from UN-Women, previously commissioned a study, in 2007, aimed at developing a uniform tool for collecting data on GBV. A unit for centralizing and managing the GBV database, Ministry officials and some CDFC coordinators then received training in the use of the SPSS software on 11 and 15 January 2010.
- In 2010, the Ministry distributed the validated database to the stakeholders and the unit in charge of managing the GBV database produced a report at the end of 2011. The Ministry is planning to revamp that centralization unit.
- In September 2011, with the technical support of the IRC and financial support from UNFPA, the country's GBV data collection tool was revised with a view to ensuring confidentiality and bringing it into line with the internationally recognized Gender-Based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS).

149. The Committee had urged Burundi "to take the necessary measures to ensure that women in detention are systematically separated from men and supervised by gender-sensitive prison staff" (**Paragraph** 26). The Government is conscious that unless such separation is brought about, acts of violence, especially sexual violence, will continue. Through the General Directorate of Penitentiary Affairs, the Government has begun separating men and women in prisons by placing them in different quarters and in police detention centres women's rooms are being separated from men's. In most cases, the women's quarters are supervised by policewomen. Burundi still lacks sufficient female police to provide that service. It does, however, have a specialized prison for women only.

Conclusion

150. This report in lieu of the fifth and sixth reports has set out to show the state of progress with implementing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women by responding to the Committee's recommendations and outlining some new advances made with implementing the Convention. It also takes stock of the numerous difficulties Burundi faces as a less developed country, in a post conflict situation and with limited resources.

151. The report has focused mainly on analysing the status of the recommendations made by the Committee, while underlining certain other aspects relating to implementation of the Convention. Compared with the situation described in the 2008 report, overall and especially as regards certain aspects Burundi has made significant progress with implementing the Convention. This applies particularly to the legal and institutional reforms it has undertaken or which are in the process of being implemented; to the awareness campaigns to ensure that those reforms are internalized and "owned" by society without clashes; to programmes for the empowerment of women, and so on. Nevertheless, it is evident that there are still gaps to be filled due to the current economic and financial crisis that is hitting the Burundian economy hard. The retraction of foreign aid as a result of this crisis has exacerbated the situation.

152. Despite these recent developments, goals have been set and every effort is being made to preserve gains already made. With the support of its international partners, there is reason to hope that the Burundian State is on track toward achieving full equality between

men and women. It has adopted legal instruments and others are being fashioned to make that equality a reality and put an end to all forms of discrimination.

153. Burundi is making every effort to ensure that women are not discriminated against or subject to any other form of exclusion due to the country's limited resources. The current political and legal context is such that one can hope that women's status can only improve. There is no risk of a regression in women's rights with respect to the legal reforms under way.

The Burundian State is committed to doing everything it can to achieve de facto and de jure equality between men and women. The legal reforms under way and the actions being taken to mobilize the population and raise awareness lead one to trust that the Convention will be implemented in all its dimensions. This report testifies sincerely to what is happening in Burundi with respect to its implementation.